

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Tilghman and Bellevue Village Master Plans

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning in Easton, Maryland, seeks the services of an experienced planning and community design consulting team to develop village master plans for the villages of Tilghman and Bellevue in Talbot County, Maryland. The overall goals of this grant-funded project are to develop strategies for the retention and expansion of water-dependent businesses, to expand waterfront access to working watermen, tourists, and village residents alike, and to evaluate the compatibility and suitability of existing and proposed land uses, infrastructure, facilities and services.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Recognizing that Tilghman and Bellevue are communities of often-times competing interests between working watermen and tourism-dependent private marinas, or between long-time residents, newcomers, and weekend tourists, Talbot County will strive, through the master planning process, to balance said interests for the betterment and long-term viability of the community as a whole. The proposed village master plans will identify opportunities for adaptive re-use and redevelopment of existing structures and properties in each village, and will ensure that new development complements (rather than contrasting with) the existing character of the community. Through the master planning process, the County seeks to reduce and minimize regulatory barriers to revitalizing and improving commercial fisheries and other water-dependent industries so that industries that currently exist in these two water-oriented villages may continue and expand into the future.

STUDY AREA - VILLAGE OF TILGHMAN

Tilghman contains a total of 552 residential dwellings and 45 commercial structures of varying sizes, and is served by a County owned and maintained wastewater treatment plant. This water-dependent community is, however, among the poorest in Talbot County. According to data from the 2010 Census, Tilghman Island (Census Designated Place) has an average per-capita income of \$26,370, compared to \$54,703 for Talbot County as a whole and \$49,023 statewide. Additionally, the estimated unemployment rate for Tilghman rose from 9.7% in 2010 to 12.6% in 2013 (2010 Census and the American Community Survey). According to data obtained from the Department of Education, 43% of the children attending Tilghman Elementary School are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, compared to a county average of 31% and a statewide average of 34%.

While only two seafood packing plants remain in operation, the Village of Tilghman continues to be the epicenter of the struggling seafood industry in Talbot County. According to 2013 data from the

American Community Survey, an estimated 109 individuals (or 18.6%) of the population of Tilghman Island continue to work in agriculture, forestry or fishing-related occupations. In addition to the commercial fisheries industry, Tilghman, in recent years, has attracted a growing number of charter fishing businesses, marinas, inns, and other tourism-related enterprises. There are, for instance, three private marinas and four inns that cater principally to weekenders and outside tourists.

The Talbot County Department of Parks and Recreation owns and manages two large public landings in Tilghman: Tonger's Basin with 9 contracted boat slips, and Dogwood Harbor with 29 contracted boat slips. Currently, commercial watermen are able to rent these slips at a reduced yearly rate. However, the Maryland Working Waterfront Commission's Final Report from 2008 identified Tilghman as among the six communities statewide in the greatest need for additional waterfront access for commercial watermen. The lack of waterfront access in Tilghman was further confirmed by the Department of Planning and Zoning in meetings and phone conversations with representatives from the Talbot Watermen's Association in the Fall of 2015.

Preliminary discussions with stakeholders and watermen also identified a number of private boatyards and marinas that currently provide commercial boat slips and ancillary support services to working watermen in Tilghman. Many of the owners of these private boatyards and marinas are advanced in age or are in precarious financial situations. There is a fear by many watermen and community stakeholders that these facilities will be sold to outside developers and converted to high-income waterfront housing or marinas which will not allow working watermen to dock there.

There are approximately 152 vacant building lots scattered throughout the village and a half dozen paper streets that have never been constructed. A preliminary drive-by assessment by the Department of Planning and Zoning revealed dozens of vacant and dilapidated dwellings and structures scattered throughout the village. Given, however, Tilghman's bucolic location fronting the Chesapeake Bay, its reasonable housing and land prices and its proximity to the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan Region, these vacant lots and dilapidated structures hold significant potential for both new development and redevelopment in future decades.

Talbot County strives to balance new growth and redevelopment in Tilghman with the needs and interests of existing local residents and working watermen. Some discussions with area residents have revealed a growing concern for the lack of affordable housing opportunities in Tilghman for working watermen and employees in the local tourism and hospitality industries.

STUDY AREA – VILLAGE OF BELLEVUE

Bellevue is a historically African-American community which contains a total of 71 residential dwellings, a Methodist Church, and a County owned and maintained public landing. The latter is the second-largest public landing in Talbot County which also accommodates the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry.

The Village of Bellevue was first platted in 1901 to serve the W.H. Valliant Packing Co., which operated a large seafood and vegetable cannery and packing house in Bellevue from 1899 to 1946. Subsequently, the W.A. Turner and Sons Packing Co. and the Bellevue Seafood Co. operated in Bellevue from 1945 to 1996 and 1964 to 1998, respectively. These two seafood processing facilities were owned and operated by the Turner family. It represented the only two African-American owned seafood packing houses on the Eastern Shore, and, as late as the 1970's, employed up to 70 crab pickers and oyster/clam shuckers.

In 2004, the family sold the property of Bellevue Seafood Co. to a developer, who converted the property to a residential use. The Turner family owned the property of the W.A. Turner and Sons Packing Co. until recently selling to a marine contracting and constructing company that intends to relocate their business to Bellevue and redevelop the site.

Bellevue also includes a 14.75-acre vacant parcel where a 29-lot residential subdivision was platted and recorded in 1955, but which lots were never individually transferred and streets never constructed. Despite being grandfathered, and having the availability of public sewer service, most of the lots do not meet the minimum lot size standards of the underlying zoning district, and therefore are not buildable. The village master plan shall examine what forms of new residential and commercial development that might occur in the future which are in keeping with the character of this community.

Given that the Village of Bellevue has gradually lost all of its packing houses, stores, and other commercial businesses over the decades, the primary purpose of the requested village master plan is to help re-establish a water-oriented commercial business where it once existed, without negatively impacting neighboring residents. The plan will discuss potential opportunities to partner with other businesses to co-locate additional commercial activity or provide additional waterfront access to commercial watermen.

SCOPE OF WORK & TASKS

The Scope of Work includes the development of two (2) village master plans; one each for Tilghman and Bellevue. The selected consultant will work closely with the appointed Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to be formed by the County Council for each village, community stakeholder groups, and the applicable local, State and federal agencies. The selected consultant will work with the CAC and the stakeholder groups and agencies to help build consensus-based solutions to the identified challenges in each village. These agencies will include, but are not limited to, the Talbot

County Department of Planning and Zoning, the Talbot County Department of Public Works, the Talbot County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Talbot County Office of Economic Development, the Maryland Critical Areas Commission, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Maryland State Highway Administration, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is estimated that each village master plan will require four (4) to six (6) public outreach meetings and visioning sessions, including a Charrette in each village. In addition, it is estimated that each village master plan will require five (5) to seven (7) meetings of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and/or joint meetings between the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission or County Council. Talbot County Government will arrange and pay any and all related costs associated with the venue and refreshments for the public meetings and Charrette. Any costs associated with the renting or purchasing of equipment for the Charrette, or visioning exercises, will be negotiated between Talbot County and the selected consultant. The Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning shall be the lead local agency throughout the process and shall provide general staff support and assistance to the selected consultant team throughout the master planning process. The village master plans shall accomplish the following goals and tasks:

- a.) **Identify and designate parcels and areas in two selected villages for a Working Waterfront Overlay District** – Each village master plan would result in identifying parcels for inclusion in a new Working Waterfront Overlay District that would be created as part of this project. This will result in the creation of a methodology for selecting parcels to be included into the Working Waterfront Overlay District which can be replicated in other unincorporated villages in Talbot County.

As set forth in the Table of Land Uses in the *Talbot County Code* §190-16, Aquaculture (retail), Aquaculture (wholesale), Fisheries Activities and Facilities, Marinas, Marine and Boat Equipment Sales and Assembly, Marine Contracting, and Marine Equipment Service and Repair uses all require a Special Exception from the Board of Appeals to operate or expand in the Village Center (VC) zoning districts. Other uses like Food Packing and Processing are not permitted at all in the VC zoning districts.

The master planning process and Charrette will allow both community stakeholder groups and the applicable reviewing agencies to identify those specific properties which are most appropriate to accommodate the before-mentioned uses, and should be permitted by right in the zoning ordinance.

- b.) **Develop a strategy to expand access in existing public (or private) landings and marinas, and/or develop new public facilities in each village**– The selected consultant will coordinate with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Talbot Watermen’s Association to conduct a water access needs assessment for each selected village (and surrounding community). The assessments will identify where

the most shortcomings and the greatest needs exist, and how, if at all, the existing capacity of public landings can be improved (i.e. additional slips, longer piers, etc.).

If it is found that the demand in the selected community is greater than what can be reasonably accommodated in existing public and private facilities, the village master plan will identify potential properties that could be acquired in the future to accommodate additional waterfront access.

Importantly, the master plan shall also identify funding strategies that the County can, or should pursue, to make the necessary infrastructure improvements at existing public landings and/or develop additional facilities.

- c.) **Identify properties in selected villages as an Intensely Developed Area (IDA) under the Talbot County Critical Area Ordinance** – Currently, all those parcels in the thirteen water-oriented villages (and zoned VC – Village Center) are designated as Limited Development Areas (LDA), which limits allowable lot coverage, barring a variance from the Board of Appeals. This is an especially limiting factor for commercial businesses in water-oriented villages (Tilghman is most affected) seeking to expand or relocate.

Those properties designated as an IDA are not subject to lot coverage requirements. The village master planning process would allow re-designation to be done holistically, and which are consistent with the State-driven definition and parameters for IDA designation, in order to facilitate redevelopment of selected areas.

- d.) **Define the preferred scale and character of future development, and the compatibility and suitability of existing and proposed land uses in each selected village** – The Village Center zoning designation, as currently written, allows for a uniform density and speaks only vaguely as to what new development or redevelopment should look like.

Analysis by the Department of Planning and Zoning reveals substantial variation in lot sizes, density, and mixing of uses across villages, especially Tilghman; reflecting that different parts of the village were constructed and built out at different time periods. A village master plan would help build consensus among community residents as to what development should look like in various locations/neighborhoods in each village, including where and how workforce or multi-family housing can be accommodated (if at all).

The selected consultant shall also analyze the effects of various build-out scenarios on traffic, both through the village and on the principle roadways, on the Bay Hundred peninsula.

- e.) **Identify priority areas and/or structures for redevelopment or rehabilitation** – Redevelopment efforts should complement the existing character of each village, and ensure continued access for both working watermen and water-oriented businesses. The village master plans shall provide guidance as to the scale and character of redevelopment as well as preferred build-out scenarios for those parcels identified for redevelopment or rehabilitation.
- f.) **Identify potential funding sources and State and local designations to leverage and encourage appropriately-scaled development and redevelopment efforts in Tilghman and Bellevue.**
- g.) **Identify what new community infrastructure is required to accommodate compatible and suitable growth and expansion of existing businesses in each selected village** - While both of the selected villages are served by County sewer, the village master plans would seek to identify what new or additional infrastructure is necessary to support new development and redevelopment efforts.

Currently, both Tilghman and Bellevue lack adequate sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and other pedestrian amenities along its streets and major thoroughfares. The proposed village master plans would seek to identify areas and locations where these pedestrian amenities (and other traffic control devices) could be constructed, if at all.

Recognizing that access to broadband internet is key to attracting new businesses and economic development efforts in general, the two village master plans will seek to identify strategies to increase broadband access in both villages.

Knapp's Narrows in Tilghman is currently recognized by the Maryland Department of Environment and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as requiring dredging assistance to maintain commercial access. The County would potentially need to coordinate with both agencies to dredge other areas, including Tar Creek in Bellevue, to accommodate both existing and new water-oriented commercial businesses.

- h.) **How existing fisheries and marine-oriented businesses and infrastructure can be mitigated for flooding and storm surge** – Most of the existing fisheries, marinas, and the marine-oriented ancillary support businesses in the vicinity of the Knapp's Narrows area of Tilghman are within the 100-year floodplain. Both the Knapp's Narrows area of Tilghman and portions of Bellevue fronting the Tred Avon River were inundated by storm surge during Hurricanes Isabel and/or Floyd. Each village master plan would identify potential strategies as to how individual areas and parcels in each selected village could be mitigated for flooding and storm surge.

- i.) **Develop a strategy(ies) as to how Talbot County can assist and work with businesses in the two selected villages, particularly Tilghman, to promote better and more effective marketing and recognition.**

DELIVERABLES

1. Digital copies of final village master plan (in PDF and MS Word) for each village;
2. Ten (10) hard copies of each final village master plan;
3. Digital copies (in an agreed upon format) of all presentation and meeting material which will be posted on the County's webpage;
4. Meeting summaries for all meetings and workshops, including written records of all public comments;
5. GIS layers/shapefiles of all completed mapping work;
6. Digital copies (in an agreed upon format) of all photographs and graphic renderings created for both village master plans, and/or during the master planning process.

SCHEDULE FOR INTERPRETIVE PROJECT

TASK	COMPLETION
Release of RFP	3/2016
Close of RFP	4/2016
Interviews	4/2016
Notice to Proceed to Selected Consultant	4/2016
Kick Off Meeting	5/2016
Initial Community Visioning Sessions	Early-Mid Summer 2016
Community Charrette(s)	Mid-Late Summer 2016
Draft Report Review	1/2017
Delivery of Final Product	2/2017
Presentation to Planning Commission	2/2017
Presentation to County Council	3/2017

SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

Sealed bids **MUST** be delivered to:

Office of the Talbot County Manager
 Courthouse, South Wing
 11 North Washington Street
 Easton, MD 21601
April 1, 2016 by 4:00 p.m.

Envelopes **MUST** be marked: “**Bid No 16-04, Tilghman and Bellevue Village Master Plans**” in the lower left corner.

** Proposals not received by the time and at the place indicated will not be considered.*

The following should be included in the proposal:

- An original and six (6) copies of the proposal;
- Contact names, phone numbers, and email addresses for the project manager and all subcontractors;
- Resumes of the project manager(s) and all subcontractors;
- A description of qualifications and experience for each individual and firm participating on the project team, including an organizational chart showing the relationship of each individual to the overall project work plan;
- A concise narrative and description as to how the potential consultant team proposes to engage community stakeholder groups and the applicable reviewing agencies throughout the master planning process to accomplish the before-mentioned goals and challenges;
- A concise narrative and description explaining how and why the potential consultant team has the necessary experiences and technical knowledge to complete the assigned tasks and goals in the master planning process;
- Estimated costs for services for each village master plan;
- Description of past experience with at least three (3) examples of similar master planning efforts. Preference is given to master planning projects completed in rural or exurban communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. Preference is also given to master planning projects completed in waterfront communities or those communities with significant environmental constraints.
- Hard or digital copies of at least three (3) similar master plans or redevelopment projects completed by the primary consulting firm and for each subcontractor.
- At least three (3) current references (more recent than three years) for each individual and/or firm that will have significant and specific responsibility for this project. Preference is given to references in rural communities in the Mid-Atlantic region.

- A master schedule that includes milestones, reviews, and delivery dates.

INQUIRIES CONCERNING THIS PROPOSAL

Please direct any questions or comments by email to:

Jeremy J. Rothwell, Planner
Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning
215 Bay Street, Suite 2
Easton, MD 21601
Email: jrothwell@talbotcountymd.gov
Telephone: 410-770-6879

*Talbot County reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, any and all proposals received in response to this **Request for Proposals**; to waive or permit cure of minor irregularities; and to conduct discussions with any or all qualified third-party consultants in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the County. This **Request for Proposals** creates no obligation on the part of the County to award a contract.*

Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning
 Jeremy J. Rothwell, Planner
 215 Bay Street, Suite 2
 Easton, MD 21601
 Phone: 410-770-6879
jrothwell@talbotcountymd.gov

Request for Proposal Summary

Project: Tilghman and Bellevue Village Master Plans

Quote: Tilghman Village Master Plan \$ _____

Bellevue Village Master Plan \$ _____

Total Project Cost \$ _____

Please submit additional information on the services you will provide as an attachment.

To be considered, please submit bid by: 4:00 p.m. on April 1, 2016

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 Courthouse, South Wing
 11 North Washington Street
 Easton, MD 21601

Envelopes MUST be marked: **"Bid No. 16-04 Tilghman and Bellevue Village Master Plans"** in
 lower left corner.

Proposals not received by the time and at the place indicated will not be considered.

 Company Name

 Contact Name

 Telephone

 Signature

 Date

Your signature will guarantee the proposed production quote will be effective for 120 days.